

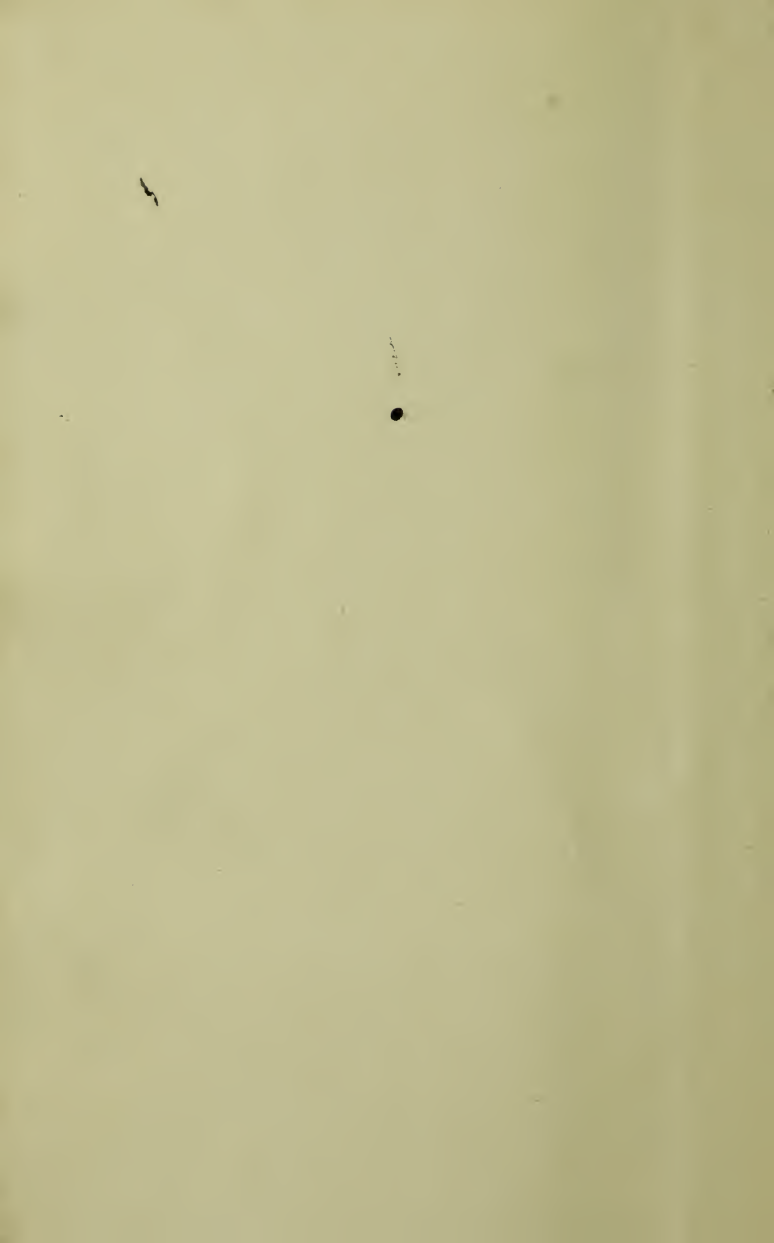


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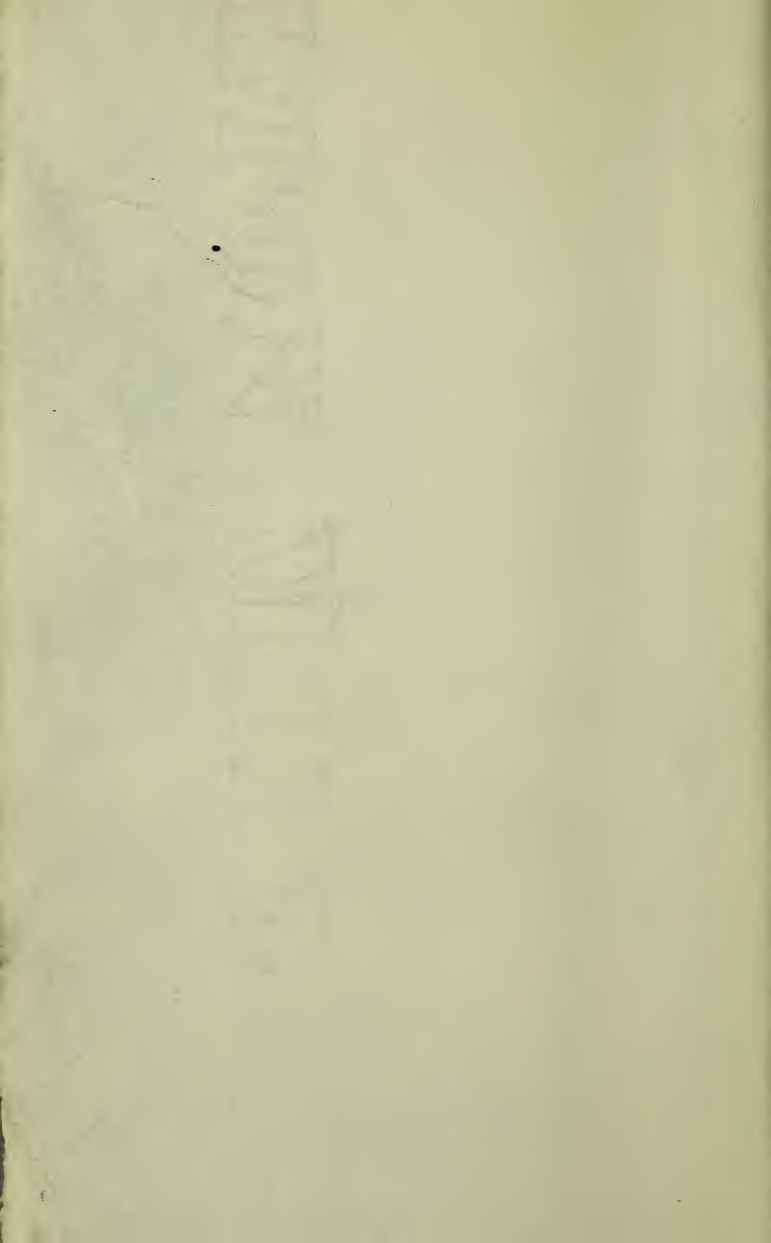
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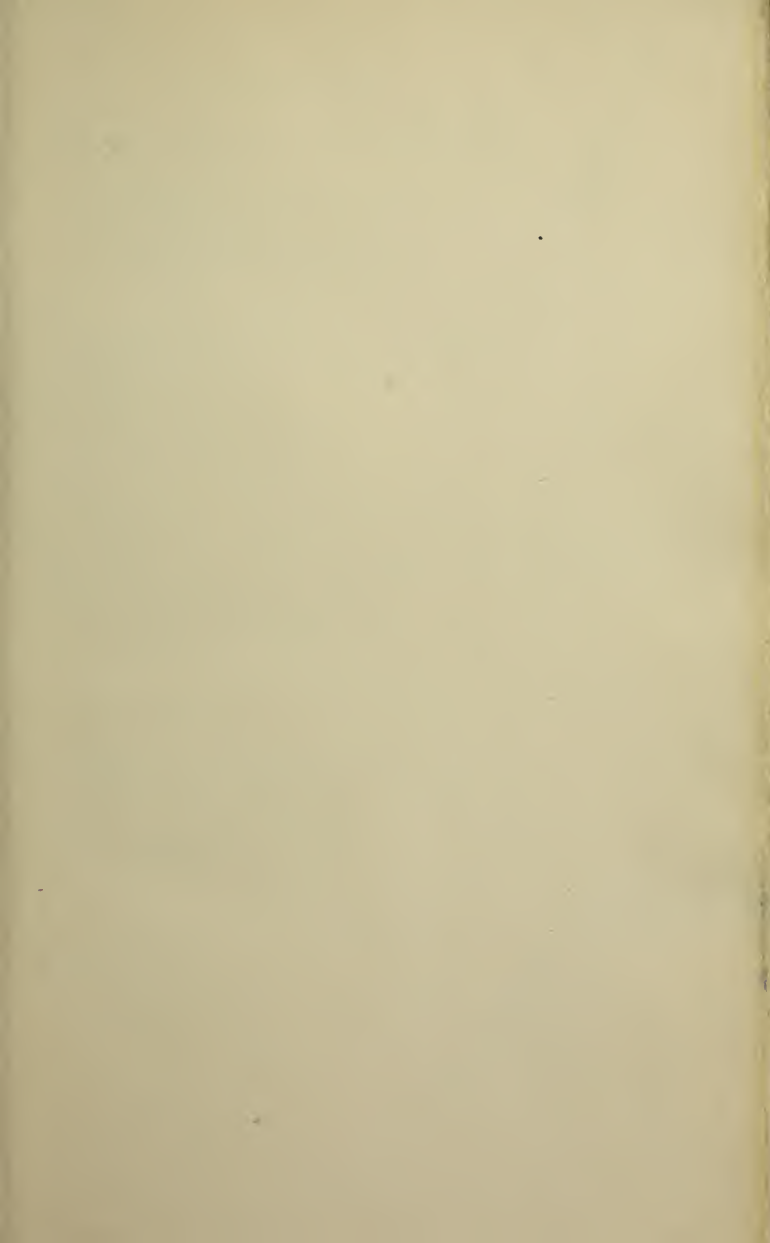
John Alden Lee.



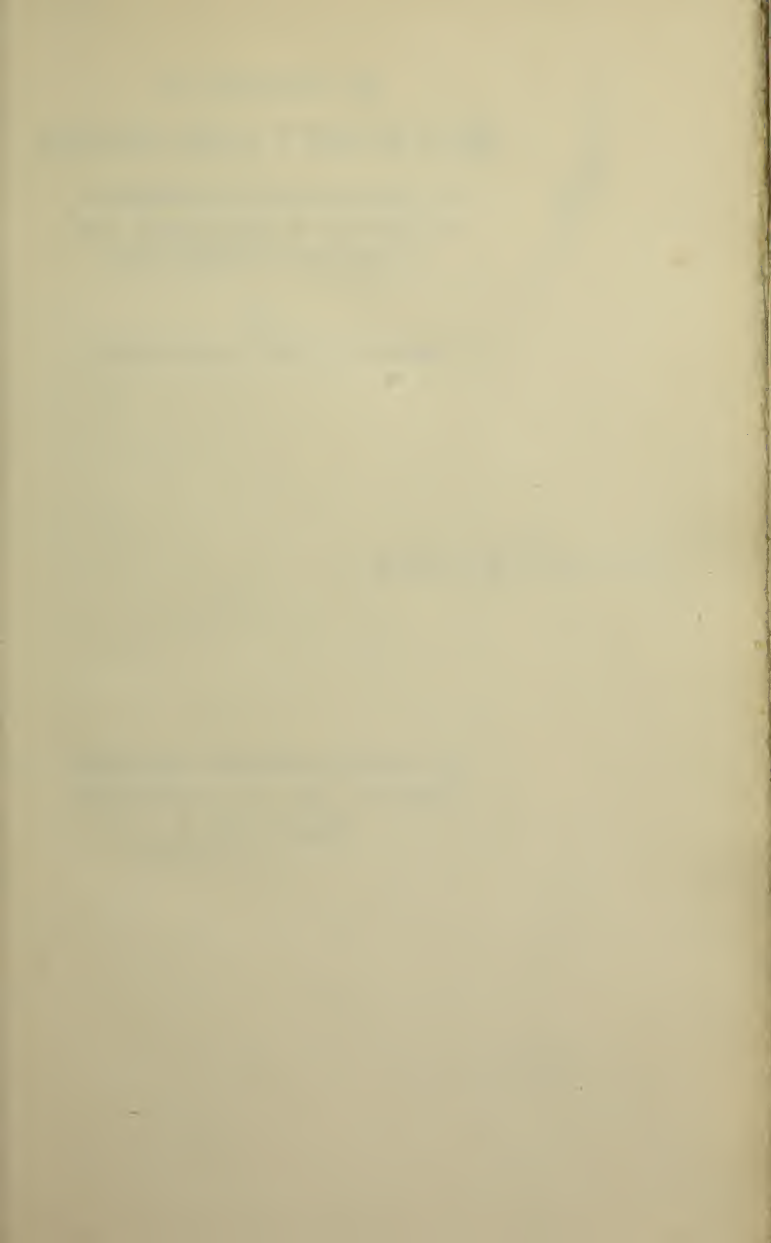
IN MEMORY OF JAMES HATTRICK LEE
A SERMON DELIVERED ^{IN} ST. MICHAEL'S
CHURCH MILTON MASSACHUSETTS
ON TRINITY SUNDAY A^{NNO} D^{OMINI} MCMIII

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IN MEMORY OF
JAMES HATTRICK LEE

A SERMON DELIVERED IN
ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH
ON TRINITY SUNDAY

BY
THEODORE IRVING REESE

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John Alden Lee,
July 22, 1903.

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HE LOOKED FOR A CITY
WHICH HATH FOUNDA-
TIONS, WHOSE BUILDER
AND MAKER IS GOD

Hebrews xi, 10

THESE words come from that great catalogue of heroes which constitutes the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In vivid pictures the heroes of mankind, from the dawn of history, are marshaled before our eyes; to each is given some personal touch, some terse phrase, which proclaims the lofty ideal which has been his inspiration and made him worthy to be called God's workman.

The words I have just read refer to Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race—that character which throughout Hebrew and Christian literature is ever held aloft as the great example of

courage and faith. He is pictured as coming forth from his far eastern home and journeying westward, ignorant of the details for the future which God had prepared for him; but moving courageously forward, his life resting in the everlasting faith in God.

As he faces the untried future, the ideal of his life is expressed by the phrase, "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The dwelling-place for which this ancient patriarch looked, the foundations upon which he wished to rest his life as he did God's work in this world, was a city resting upon the eternal, whose builder and maker is God.

You know how this vision of an eternal city runs through the pages of the Old and New Testaments; how Jerusalem, the Holy City built by man's hands yet having in it the presence of Almighty God, was for the ancient Hebrews the type of the eter-

nal work man should do here in the strength of God's presence; and how the Bible closes with that great vision of "the Holy City the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven."

We meet this morning in solemn, reverent, yet joyful service to the memory of one who for ten years has gone in and out among us, whose hands were instrumental in the founding and building of this parish, whose simple, noble life fulfilled that great definition of pure religion and undefiled, by living "unspotted from the world." As his earnest face and form rises in our memory, instinctively there comes to us these words, describing the ideal of that ancient hero of the Hebrews, "He looked for a city whose builder and maker is God." He was a workman whose whole energy was devoted to the building of eternal things. He rested his life upon that which God made — he

was satisfied with nothing less than this. Back of everything in life he saw the eternal; in all his work he kept his eyes on this. Above all else he scorned shame, pretence, and hypocrisy, and loved genuineness, sincerity, and truth. The city for which he looked was the type of the eternal work he felt God had given his manhood to build, and in the courage and faith of this vision he went forth to his work.

James Hattrick Lee was born in Boston on the 23d of August, 1843. His boyhood was passed in the city of his birth, and his education was gained in the schools of Boston and Charlestown. He was but twenty when he graduated from Amherst College, with the degree of A.B. The civil war was still in progress, the issue of that conflict not yet decided. Intensely patriotic, and possessing the moral qualities which make the true soldier, he enlisted in the Massachu-

setts Heavy Artillery, and found himself before the city of Washington, guarding its defenses. Though sharing in no conflict with the Confederate troops, such was his bearing and character that he was speedily advanced to the rank of second lieutenant on the staff of General Augur.

At the close of the war he entered the Theological Seminary at Andover, in preparation for the Christian ministry. Andover in '65 offered exceptional opportunities to the student of theology, and had on its faculty some brilliant scholars. Here the scholarly qualities of Mr. Lee, and his love for truth, began to be aroused, and at the close of his first year at Andover he went to Germany, where he studied under German scholars and theologians whose names were famous throughout the religious world.

On his return from Germany, Mr. Lee entered the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge. As to the

impression that he made upon those who knew him, let me quote the words of Dr. Alexander V. G. Allen, at that time professor in this institution, who, in describing Mr. Lee, applies to him words spoken of Dr. Westcott, late bishop of Durham, by one of his fellow students :

“ He was profoundly reverent, affectionate, single minded, enthusiastic, blameless — an example of Christian goodness.” “ These qualities,” adds Dr. Allen, “ I recognized in him whenever I have met him in later years.”

At the close of his year's study in Cambridge, Mr. Lee was ordained to the Christian ministry by Bishop Eastburn in Lawrence, Mass.

His twenty years of service in the Christian ministry were passed in work in St. Johns, Lawrence, Mass., rector of St. James, Long Island, and rector of St. John's Church, Canandaigua, N. Y. During the last few weeks, it

has been my privilege to read many of the sermons preached during these years. They breathe the strong, earnest love of God and man. The words are fired with an almost passionate appeal to men to lay hold of the eternal in this life, to make God the builder and maker of their character. There is also the strong, manly appeal to men, to behold the simplicity and strength of Jesus Christ and to fashion their stature after His likeness.

He was not merely a theologian; his life was open to and in sympathy with all of life. The beauty of nature spoke to him of her Creator, the messages of the poets taught him their inspirations from God; the classic history of Greece and Rome, their heroes and deeds, touched the heroic and courageous in his own life; the truths of science and her laws were expressions of the laws of God. All this rich knowledge of life in its various manifestations, he brought to-

gether in his sermons, and poured it forth with the voice and power of a prophet.

Men heard Mr. Lee and his message with joy ; they felt that here was a man to whom God and religion was a reality, to whom faith was reasonable. His was a voice in the wilderness that refreshed and strengthened many a weary soul. The age was one of great religious unrest. The conflict between scientific and religious thought was at its height. The church in Western New York was not abreast of the new statements of religious thought that were being slowly worked out in the East, and this prophet of the new era, year by year, felt the gap widening between his scientific knowledge and the received ideals of the Church. As a man who hated sham and hypocrisy above all things, the essence of whose life was sincerity, his sense of honesty made him doubt his right to preach what he believed to

be true in a diocese and in a church holding different ideas.

No one who has not been through the valley of the shadow of doubt, who has not wrestled with doubt in all its forms, can know how deep and hard is the struggle from darkness to light.

There is a passage in one of his sermons which reveals what was passing in the soul of the man. The sermon is on a verse in the 37th Psalm.

“The Lord ordereth a good man’s going and maketh his way acceptable to himself. Though he fall he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.” Listen to these words :

“How then, my friends, shall we seek God’s guidance in the difficulties and uncertainties of life? Not by expecting that the faculties he has given us for our guidance shall be supplanted by some miraculous revelation of duty; not by abandoning

ourselves to the uncertain currents of impulse or of circumstances ; but by fixing our eyes on the clear but distinct aim which God has set before us, subordinating all wishes, all purposes, all plans, to its attainment. . . .

“The faith in God’s guidance of our lives ought to make two facts clear for our direction : that there is a light within, and that there is a light above of which the first is but the reflection, and from these two, not opposite, but mutually convincing tempers should flow firmness to tread the path which the inward light discloses, stoically to seek another, where God’s light brightening that other, reveals a better way.

“The wisdom which shall combine these two in right proportion must be the slow result of God’s discipline, but remember the first condition of knowing what is true is the will to do what is right.”

The picture of the man struggling with doubt for a moment fades away,

and we see again the form of that Hebrew patriarch journeying westward, the future hidden from him, but in confidence "looking for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." As this faith led Abraham of old into the light of the eternal, so the better way became clear to Mr. Lee, and he wrote to his bishop requesting him to accept his resignation from the Christian ministry.

The closing words of this letter reveal the spirit and the motive of the writer better than any words of mine.

"To brush away the golden mist which surrounds the sacred figure of the Lord, is a thankless and a painful task. But if one may thereby see him more clearly and feel the breathing of this human heart, this gain richly repays the pain."

None but a great man could have acted as he did. It is the little man who compromises with truth and hon-

esty, and is willing to be false to his heavenly vision. It takes a man of rare courage and deep faith to act as did he whom we remember to-day.

Fourteen years have passed since then, and during these years it was given Mr. Lee to see the Church which he loved, and in which he remained a loyal communicant all his life, grow into the acceptance of the very truths which dawned upon him while in her ministry.

As to-day we look back at his life we see that his Christian ministry changed only in its form, for his whole life was a ministry, and through the ministry of teaching to which he next gave himself, the same noble character continued to give forth its power of inspiring and uplifting others.

For some years Mr. Lee conducted a school for boys in Rochester, New York, and in 1892 he came to the Milton Academy as master in that institution. What his influence was in

this academy you all well know. I think we see it more clearly now than when he was here. Our minds picture the various ways in which we beheld him — patiently working with some dull boy, giving out his best in the class-room, working far into the night over some new experiment, in his laboratory, occasionally joining in the athletic games, and always heartily cheering the boys on to victory, working in his garden, sitting in his home, — a home which was indeed a Christian home, where the highest ideals were realized — a homewhere many a homesick boy found a friend, and those in doubt or trouble a sympathetic companion. Everywhere Mr. Lee was the same, doing everything with all his might, placing the interests and welfare of others always before his own.

He was a living inspiring example of that motto which the institution has placed on her shield, "Dare to be true." The Milton Academy in all

its future will have no more complete and perfect example of these high ideals it wishes to fulfill and realize in the boys committed to her care, than was daily lived out by this her great humble teacher.

Dr. Allen writes :

“ I could have asked for no young man a higher privilege than to come under his influence. He surely leaves behind him a rich legacy in the way of inspiration and example and a life in which all relationships were fulfilled in accordance with the highest ideals.”

The relation of Mr. Lee to this Parish constitutes one of her greatest blessings. He was the first and only Senior Warden this church has had during the seven years of her existence. His guiding hand and wise, sane counsel kept the life of the Parish strong and steered her safely through many difficulties. Faithful in every duty, loving the Church with all his soul, he has given to this Parish a

splendid example of Christian manhood, the expression, the demonstration of the "power of an endless life."

When we think of the work this man accomplished, and marvel at its strength and power, we have just begun to know that the man himself was, for a man is always greater than his work,

"No great thinker ever lived and
taught you
All the wonder that his soul re-
ceived."

The vision of the work is but the indication of the greatness within the soul of the worker.

At times there came flashes from the depth of his character that made us stand before him in wonder and reverence. Under the heavy pressure of adversity, or in the presence of death in his home, we saw how deep were the foundations of his life, how truly God was their builder and

maker, for on such occasions the character of the man was transfigured. Those who saw him felt that they stood in the presence of a faith and courage that was truly sublime and Godlike.

The vision of the eternal city was ever in his mind; the light which came from its towers was the light in which he worked; the foundations of its buildings was the symbol of the eternal foundation upon which his life rested; the river of the water of life which flowed through the streets of that city was to him the symbol of that refreshment and satisfaction given to those who thirst after righteousness.

Was it chance or was it God's Providence that led this workman of God into that ancient city of Rome, called "The Eternal City"? Was it chance or was it God's Providence, that in this city of ancient heroes, the city of Seneca, Cicero, Marcus Aurelius, and

Paul, the Christian Apostle, a modern hero of splendid faith and courage should come for rest and recreation?

Was it chance or was it God's Providence that, in this city from which were written those great words of Paul as he drew to the end of his pilgrimage, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," another noble soldier and servant of Jesus Christ, fulfilling perfectly the words of Paul, entered into the full presence of his Master whom for three score years he had so nobly served?

In the English cemetery, outside the walls of Rome, where lie the body of Keats, the ashes of Shelley, was laid to rest the body of James Hattrick Lee, minister, teacher, servant of God. Here, "He looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God," and behold God hath now perfectly fulfilled for him that vision and "prepared for him a city."

“In the land of pure delight where saints immortal reign,” God’s noble workman lives. God hath proved him, and found him worthy of Himself, worthy “To enter in by the gates into the city” — the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Let us thank God that this life has been lived among us, and show forth our thanks, “not only with our lips, but in our lives.”



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